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The Summer of Love Breeds a Season of Hate: The Effects of the Manson Murders on Public Perceptions of the Hippie Lifestyle

by Curt Rowlett

At the time of this writing, interesting recent press coverage hearkens back to two of 1969s most notorious events.

The first story concerns the new search for possible Manson family murder victims long rumored to have been buried in the desert near Manson's old hideout at Barker Ranch in California's Death Valley. This theory of unknown murder victims stems from a statement attributed to Manson family member Susan Atkins, who allegedly told a fellow inmate she was incarcerated with that there were "three people out in the desert that they done in," referring to other possible victims during the Manson family's spree of killings during the summer of 1969. As reported by the press, a team of forensic scientists have traveled recently to Barker Ranch and used cadaver dogs, ground penetrating radar and other equipment in an attempt to locate these possible victims.

According to the report, the scientists located “three large areas of interest.”

The story second concerns a BBC News report that details the revelation from the FBI’s own files that the Hell’s Angels may have actually tried to assassinate Mick Jagger at his rented home in Long Island, New York in retaliation for Jagger’s comments following the disastrous concert at Altamont in late 1969. The murder attempt supposedly failed after the boat carrying the would-be assassins foundered during a storm, almost drowning them.

That these two stories continue to resonate in modern times in not such a surprise. The article below discusses the detrimental effects that the Manson murders, the ill-fated concert at Altamont, and numerous other crimes that the press of the day dubbed “hippie murders,” had on the hippie image.

– Curt Rowlett

Note: Curt Rowlett is a researcher and writer with a penchant for the mystical, mysterious, and macabre. He is also: a serious student of the paranormal and unexplained, a former merchant marine who has traveled all over the world, an ex-rock musician, and an old-fashioned, southern gentleman. His work has appeared in the books Popular Paranoia, Labyrinth13: True Tales of the Occult, Crime & Conspiracy, and the magazines Fortean Times, Paranoia Magazine, Steamshovel Press and Strange Magazine. Labyrinth13: True Tales of the Occult, Crime & Conspiracy.

“You play the game of money. As long as you can sell a newspaper, some sensationalism, and you can laugh at someone and joke at someone and look down at someone, you know. You just sell those newspapers for public opinion, just like you are all hung on public opinion, and none of you have any idea what you are doing. You are just doing what you are doing for the money, for a little bit of attention from someone.”

Statement made by Charles Manson, while testifying at the Tate-LaBianca murder trial

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“This will be remembered as the first of the acid murders . . . we’re on the brink of a whole new concept of violence . . . perpetrated against society by people who have reached a different plateau of reality through LSD.”

Statement made by Manson family attorney Paul Fitzgerald, while discussing the Tate-LaBianca murders with the press

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“Acid is groovy, kill the pigs.”

Words allegedly chanted by hippie thrill killers during the 1970 bludgeoning and stabbing murders of the Jeffrey MacDonald family

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In much the same way as the “satanic panic” hit in the 1980’s, a wave of “hippie cult hysteria” flourished in the wake of the 1969 Manson murders. Subsequently, public perceptions of the hippies as a non-violent, peace-loving subculture began to shift dramatically.

Many hippies who were involved in the original “counterculture” during that time period had stories to tell about negative fallout from a public who had begun to associate the hippie lifestyle with a series of horrifyingly violent, drug-induced crimes that occurred across America toward the end of the 1960’s. As a result, the Manson murders, being only the first to be so publicized, later became linked to a greater cultural fear aided by numerous shocking and widely reported similar crimes. (Along with the Manson case, there were many other grisly and highly publicized murders and other crimes that had either been committed by or linked in the public mind to “hippie” elements or to so-called “drug crazed cultists” living in communal settings).

These events, played for full sensational effect in the media, would occur within such short time frames from

each other that for awhile, the public was literally bombarded with a shocking portrait of the hippie community, one that shifted from the old view of hippies as the epitome of passive gentleness into a new, frighteningly savage image.

The fallout was swift and all-encompassing. And in much the same vein, this media-constructed image of the drug-crazed, murderous hippie was no different than the way veterans returning from the Vietnam War would also be stereotyped in the mid-1970's, both by the press and Hollywood. That exploitation included fostering the image of Vietnam vets as war-traumatized, unstable individuals, likely to snap and go on a violent rampage at any given moment. (I can recall only too well how many television programs and B-movies of that era exploited not only the image of Vietnam vets, but also by catering to public fears about such things as roving bands of \"psychopathic" biker gangs, angry black power "militants" with guns, and of course, exploitation films about sex-crazed, blood-thirsty hippies living in spaced-out drug communes).

In the book Helter Skelter, prosecutor Vincent Bugliosi tells of this backlash against hippie-types in the aftermath of the Manson case where sensational press coverage laid the murders out in all their gory detail. Bugliosi writes:

If the press and TV reports were correct, a majority of young people whom the media had lumped together under the label "hippies" disavowed Manson. Many stated that the things he espoused , such as violence, were directly contrary to their eliefs. And more than a few were bitter about the guilt by association. It was almost impossible to hitchhike anymore; one youth told a New York Times reporter, "If you're young, have a beard, or even long hair, motorists look at you as if you're a 'kill-crazy cultist' and jam the gas." (1)

Immediately after the story of Susan Atkins' confession to the bloody Tate-LaBianca murders was splashed across the front page of the Los Angeles Times, the public perceptions of the flower children began to change. Author Jess Bravin wrote:

The reaction came down hard on hippies. On page one, the San Francisco Chronicle summed it up in a story from Topanga, a place the Family loved: Manson Arrest Reaction: 'The War On The Longhairs.' 'A housewife sees a long-haired hitchhiker, hesitates, and drives by,' the story began. 'A bearded man walks into a store and the clerk asks, half in jest, 'Did you have anything to do with the murders.' Esquire later devoted an entire issue to what it called the 'New Evil,' sending writer Gay Talese to the Spahn Ranch and filling out the magazine with articles on witches in Hollywood, satanic-themed artwork, and musings on the future of California's latest trend. And Life, describing what it called Manson's 'blithe and gory crimes,' reported that the prime suspect had 'attuned his concepts of villainy to the childish yearnings of these hippie converts, to their weaknesses and catchwords, their fragmentary sense of religion and enchantment with drugs and idleness, and immersed them in his own ego and idiotic visions of the Apocalypse.' (2)

The use of LSD, a drug that was firmly rooted in the public consciousness as being one of the prime motivating forces behind the hippie movement, had never been viewed as anything but dangerous. But following the Manson murders, LSD developed an even more ominous association. Bravin recounts the following comment from Manson family attorney Paul Fitzgerald:

"This will be remembered as the first of the acid murders. [W]e're on the brink of a whole new concept of violence [p]erpetrated against society by people who have reached a different plateau of reality through LSD." (3)

However, one of the many ironies of the Manson trial was that the prosecution was put into the position of actually having to defend LSD use in order to combat defense assertions that LSD made people crazy and/or could turn ordinary people into killers. (The defense hoped to be able to show that the Manson defendants' use of LSD had affected their minds and as such, they were not responsible for their actions). The prosecution was forced to call expert witnesses who testified that people under the influence of LSD were not normally violent. (4)

The Manson trial lasted for ten months and was a virtual media feeding frenzy almost from day one. That the press focused on the fact that the Manson family was comprised of mostly young hippie flower children who had turned to bloody murder fed the public's general fear of drugged-out hippie "thrill killers" high on LSD. (And as I noted in Chapter 10 of this book, Susan Atkins would later claim that the Manson murders had been committed in order to "instill fear into the establishment." It can now be argued that their strategy actually succeeded quite well).

The December 12, 1969 issue of Life Magazine (titled “The Love and Terror Cult” and including the sub-headings, “The man who was their leader; the charge of multiple murder; the dark edge of hippie life”) featured a full front cover photo of what was to become the most widely distributed photograph of Manson and his “hypnotic stare.” At the time, Life Magazine had a huge distribution, a fact that ensured that the fear Manson inspired could gain entry into virtually every home in America. (5)

Hippies on their way to the Woodstock music festival in August of 1969 recalled passing newsstands with blaring headlines about the bloody Tate murders that had occurred only days before. Later, when the killers were caught and identified as young hippies, the Woodstock generation faced a more hostile than usual public whose fear had been stoked by lurid stories of violence committed by wild-eyed, drugged-out longhairs. Karlene Faith, author of a book about former Manson follower Leslie Van Houten, would write how:

[T]he Manson murders dominated the California media for over a year. When the accused were found to have come out of a hippie commune, the attention intensified. The media latched on to people’s worst fears about hippies and the antiwar movement. By the end of the trial, Manson’s murders were touted as a singular milestone in the annals of homicide. (6)

Author Katherine Ramsland, commenting about a series of “hippie murders” that occurred during the 1969-1970 time period, noted how:

There was already plenty of tension between ordinary people making a living and those who had “dropped out” to get high and find a more communal type of life by rebelling against established traditions. Each group eyed the other with suspicion. Now, people believed, some of those hippies were showing their stripes, their peace-loving slogans notwithstanding. (7)

On December 6, 1969, a mere four months after the Manson murders, four people lost their lives at the Rolling Stones free concert held at the Altamont Speedway near San Francisco. Two of those people died after they were run over and crushed by vehicles while asleep in their sleeping bags and another person drowned; most shockingly of all, Meredith Hunter, an eighteen year old black man, was brutally beaten and stabbed to death by a group of Hell’s Angels.

The Hell’s Angels, hired by the Rolling Stones to act as concert security in exchange for $500 worth of beer, had also allegedly been given access to multiple tabs of orange sunshine LSD. (As noted in Project Mind Kontrol, Chapter 12 of the book, Labyrinth13: True Tales of the Occult, Crime & Conspiracy, also appearing in Steamshovel #16, many of the Altamont concert attendants said later that this orange sunshine LSD seemed to be “contaminated” and produced a very negative vibe of violence and death).

Medical reports from the show indicate that Altamont was dominated by numerous incidents of violence. Chief among these were \ ltercations between concert goers and the Hell’s Angels that occurred throughout the day. (Marty Balin, Jefferson Airplane’s lead singer, was knocked unconscious by a Hell’s Angel during a scuffle near the stage. Balin had tried to intervene while the Angels were beating a man with pool sticks. When band mate Paul Kantner told the audience what had happened, another Hell’s Angel grabbed the microphone and began threatening him).

Almost immediately after the Rolling Stones took the stage, another fight broke out, perhaps due to some sort of strange energy, as the band began playing their fist song “Sympathy for the Devil.” (The band halted the song when they became aware that some sort of violence was happening and Mick Jagger could be heard saying into the microphone, “Something very funny always happens when we start that number.” It was near the end of the band’s second song that the murder occurred).

In the aftermath, the view held by many was that while the word “Woodstock” stood for all that was positive and good about the hippie subculture, “Altamont” was seen as all that could go wrong. In a very real sense, the event spelled the death knell for the innocence of “flower power,” and for many people, Altamont was seen as a sort of “apocalyptic” ending to all of the 60’s peace and love vibrations.

As noted, the Manson case was not the only blow to the image of hippies as a peace-loving community as other murders, often dubbed by the press as “hippie cult murders,” took place very close to the same time period:

On February 17, 1970 in North Carolina, just six months after the Manson murders, Army officer Jeffrey MacDonald claimed to have been attacked in his home at the Fort Bragg military base by a group of four hippies who were high on LSD. MacDonald would later tell investigators that after being awakened by his wife's screams to find intruders in his house, he was stabbed and knocked unconscious and that three male members of a hippie cult then viscously murdered his pregnant wife and two young daughters. All of this allegedly occurred while a lone female hippie with long blond hair and carrying a lighted candle, stood by chanting, "Acid is groovy, kill the pigs." (The case had many striking parallels to the Manson murders, including alleged "crazed hippie" perpetrators; the savage amount of "overkill" inflicted on the victims; the writing of the word "pig" on the walls of the MacDonald home in the victim's own blood; and the fact that Colette MacDonald, like Manson murder victim Sharon Tate, was pregnant at the time she was murdered). Although years later MacDonald would be tried and convicted for the murders himself, in the mind of the public, these crimes remained linked to "drug-crazed hippie cult killers." (8)

On July 13, 1970, a hippie hitchhiker named Stanley Dean Baker was arrested in California for the murder of a Montana man who had stopped to give him a ride. According to police, Baker admitted that he had shot the man to death and then cannibalized the body. (In fact, Baker admitted to cutting out and eating the victim's heart and also had bones from the man's fingers in his pocket when apprehended). Baker was branded a "hippie satanist" by the popular press because he had both a recipe for LSD and a copy of The Satanic Bible in his possession when he was arrested. While Baker would later tell both law enforcement officials and fellow inmates that he had participated in a "blood drinking cult" in Wyoming, he later confessed that his crimes were actually the result of his drug use and had nothing to do with any involvement with satanism. (9)

Three months later, on October 19, 1970, firemen in Santa Cruz, California, responding to a fire at an upscale home in the Soquel area of the city, found five bodies floating in the home's swimming pool, all dead from gunshot wounds to the back of the head. The victims included Dr. Victor Ohta, his wife and two sons, and Dr. Ohta's secretary.

A note left by the killer on Dr. Ohta's car threatened death to any "persons who misuses the natural environment or destroys same" by the "People of the Free Universe." The note ended with a reference to the four knight cards of the tarot deck.

Within days, police investigators began targeting suspects in the Santa Cruz hippie community and a major rift between the hippies and police developed. In a newspaper article, a relative of one of the victims suggested that the murders could only have been committed by a "Manson-type cult." Soon after that statement, a local hippie hangout received several bomb threats. A reporter for the Santa Cruz Sentinel wrote that:
The Soquel massacre, steeped in mysticism and stamped with a clear warning that other similar attacks might follow, has chilled the marrow of the established community . . . hippie-types, for their part, fear indiscriminate vigilante retaliation against innocent members of their culture. (10)

What may not be as well known is the fact that members of the local hippie community actually led the police to John Linley Frazier, a paranoid hippie loner who used LSD and mescaline and who was apparently obsessed with both ecology and aspects of the occult. Frazier had been kicked out of several Santa Cruz area hippie communes for his bizarre behavior and was living alone in a small cabin near the Ohta home at the time of the murders. (He was tried and convicted of the murders and given the death penalty, a sentence that was later commuted to life in prison after the death penalty was ruled unconstitutional).

Almost simultaneously (beginning on October 13, 1972, in Felton, California), hippie-type Herbert Williams Mullin committed the first of thirteen murders, carried out in the belief that in doing so, he would save California from a cataclysmic earthquake. Mullin was a paranoid schizophrenic who had been in and out of mental hospitals all of his life, but who would later be judged legally sane at his murder trial. His history of mental illness notwithstanding, Mullin was depicted in the press as just another burned-out hippie whose mind had been fried by drug use, as Mullin was a known LSD user. (One hippie later recalled that while in his presence, Mullin had ingested a whopping ten hits of LSD all at once). The District Attorney assigned to prosecuting the case was quoted as saying, "This is the result of people flipping out, and people taking drugs, and people doing their own thing."

Mullin's series of murders took place near Santa Cruz where many hippie communes flourished. The aftermath of the murders served to add more paranoia and mistrust towards hippies in the public mind, even though Mullin had actually killed several "hippie types" himself and would later claim to hate hippies. (11)

Other lesser know horror stories about so-called “LSD murders” also began to take their toll on the image of the hippie movement. Tales of alleged LSD-fueled violence were sensationalized in virtually every newspaper and television screen in America, both directly and indirectly blaming psychedelic drugs and the hippie lifestyle for violence: sponsors of a New York state bill to increase the penalties for possession of LSD cited one newspaper story as an example of the LSD-fueled hippie menace. In this story, it was reported that Stephen Kessler, a thirty-two year old Harvard graduate student and ex-mental patient who had committed a brutal murder, claimed to have been “flying on LSD for three days” and that he could not remember anything about the homicide. Law enforcement officers promptly labeled this case an “LSD murder.” (The newspaper headlines declared Kessler to be a “Mad LSD Slayer” and “LSD Killer”). At Kessler’s trial, psychiatrists testified that he actually suffered from chronic paranoid schizophrenia. He was found not guilty by reason of insanity with the issue of his use of LSD never being raised or corrected in the public mind. (In fact, it was later disclosed that Kessler had not used LSD for a whole month prior to the murder). (12)

Several urban legends have been spawned that further illustrate the fear that the public has of the drug-crazed hippie killer, one of which is the tale of the “Hippie Babysitter.” According to the Snopes Urban Legend Reference Pages, the basic story goes like this:
A couple leaves their infant in the charge of a teenage, hippie-type girl while they go out on the town for the evening. When the mother phones home a few hours later to check up on things, the babysitter informs her that everything is fine and that she has put the turkey in the oven. A few moments later the couple recalls that they left no turkey at home; they rush home and find that the babysitter, high on LSD, has cooked their baby in the oven. (13)

Other urban legends depicting the alleged sinister motives of hippies and the dangers of LSD use include the tales of “Blue Star Acid,” where paper rub-on “tattoos” featuring cartoon characters laced with LSD were supposedly being handed out to school children by evil hippie drug dealers; (the drug is allegedly absorbed through the skin simply by handling the paper or pressing it onto wet skin). And then there is the infamous tale of two hippie youths who, after ingesting LSD, stare at the sun until they go blind. (The latter story actually appeared as serious reporting in a several national newspapers).

From almost the beginning, Hollywood also got in on the action and produced a number of extremely lurid hippie exploitation films masquerading as cautionary public service announcements, but which were in fact aimed directly at feeding a morbid public appetite while pretending to take a moral stance. Often depicting drug-crazed hippies living and freaking out in “Manson family” style communes, such films as The Hallucination Generation (1967) and Riot on Sunset Strip (1967) depicted “hippie” youths running wild in an orgy of group sex, drugs, crime and even murder.

The Manson murders were also the subject of several ultra-low budget movies that were quickly churned out in the wake of the murders in order to cash in on the “killer hippie cult” hysteria. A short list of those films would include: The Other Side of Madness (also known as The Helter Skelter Murders), a sleazy 1970 film produced in record time, appearing almost immediately after the arrest of the Manson family. The Helter Skelter Murders was a blatant attempt to cash in on all the lurid publicity while claiming to depict the “true story” of the Manson murders. (The movie was shot on several authentic locations and features a dramatization of Manson’s “Helter Skelter” race war. Also includes one of Manson’s own songs, “Mechanical Man” in the score); the 1971 film Snuff (later renamed Slaughter) in which a bearded and very creepy Manson-like cult leader uses hypnosis on young girls in order to orchestrate a series of murders; I Drink Your Blood, a 1971 film about a cult of homicidal, acid-dropping, devil-worshipping hippies whose Manson-esque leader utters the classic line, “Let it be known, sons and daughters, that Satan was an acid head.” (From the press-book accompanying the release of I Drink Your Blood, we find the warning “Did you ever imagine what would happen if your community were invaded by hippies? You can now see what can happen to a town when hippies go wild!” This film has been humorously described by one reviewer as “the quintessential tale of a group of Satan-worshipping hippies who ingest meat pies contaminated by the blood of a rabid dog and go on a murder spree”). Finally, we have The Love Thrill Murders (1971), a soft-core porn film that features actor Troy Donahue as “Moon,” a violence-obsessed, Manson-clone who is the leader of a murderous Jesus freak hippie cult in New York City’s Greenwich Village. High marks for negative public influence would also have to go to both the 1972 documentary film Manson by Laurence Merrick and Robert Hendrickson and the 1976 made-for-television movie, Helter Skelter. While Merrick and Hendrickson’s Manson was less exploitative than its fictional Hollywood counterpart, Helter Skelter, both managed to scare the hell out of the general public. (For a list of other notable hippie exploitation films and/or movies that contain themes directly inspired by the Manson murders, see Labyrinth13:

True Tales of the Occult, Crime & Conspiracy, Appendix 6, List of Hippie Exploitation and Manson-Inspired Films).

In addition to the film exploitation of the Manson murders, many magazine articles and books about the case followed quickly on the heels of the actual events and would also fuel the general public fear. Most notable of these was the true crime novel Helter Skelter (first published in 1974) in which the murders were not only graphically detailed, but also where prosecutor Vincent Bugliosi seldom missed a chance to strongly moralize against the hippie lifestyle in general, to a large extent, blaming the excesses of the counter culture for producing the likes of Charles Manson and his family. Bugliosi's book (and the two television miniseries it would later spawn) would not only exploit the hippie image, but would also commercialize the fear that the Manson murders and similar crimes had spread. But the truth be known, many of the more gruesome "facts" presented by Bugliosi -- much of it drawn from the confessions and testimony of the killers themselves -- would later prove to have been based on embellishments made by Manson family members who wanted to shock the general public as much as possible. (A few examples of this would include the supposed death list of Hollywood celebrities that members of the Manson family claimed they had plans to kill; the false assertion made by family member Steve Grogan that he had cut murder victim Donald "Shorty" Shea into nine pieces or the highly suspect claim made by a prison informer that Susan A tkins said she had actually tasted Sharon Tate's blood which later proved to be just another example of Atkins' propensity for braggadocio). Author Karlene Faith noted that:
After successfully prosecuting four of the accused, Los Angeles District Attorney Vincent Bugliosi wrote a mass-market novel-like book (Helter Skelter) about the murders. At the time, its cover made the promise, "No matter how much you think you know about the Manson case, this incredible book will shock you." It was a best-seller, and is still in print today, replete with inaccuracies due to the defendants' false testimony in court and their own propagation of sensationalized myths. One reviewer describes this book as "a morality play of the highest order, with the crusading prosecutor battling a demonic Manson on one hand and the bumbling of the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) on the other. One of Manson's messages, like St. Augustine's, was the he (and everyone) represented the perfect dialectic of God and Devil, life and death, good and evil, sacred and profane. The symbolism was perfectly geared to a Hollywood sensibility. Through the lenses of the prosecutor, a woefully tragic set of murders became mythic owing to their perversely formulaic entertainment value. Bugliosi went on to oversee the 1976 CBS-TV version of his story, and to make $2500 per speech (a large sum at the time) on the lecture circuit. (14)

In part, public hysteria about the hippie movement had as much to do with the explosion of huge numbers of hippie youth communes as did films and books with their garish tales about sex orgies and rampant drug use. Although communal living has a long history in other countries, such living arrangements were a relatively new phenomenon in America and in the mid to late 60's, were to be found almost exclusively in the hippie subculture. During that time, the common public perception (again, due to media exploitation) was basically a belief that the hippie communes were all dens of rampant drug use, free love, and general immorality, but history shows a far more diverse picture than what the stereotype suggests. Many communes were founded on a religious basis or with an emphasis on spirituality and very disciplined lifestyles. Others were simply created in the search for a Utopian society.

In 1970, the Manson family's own communal lifestyle was the subject of a detailed study conducted by Dr. David E. Smith, M.D. and Alan J. Rose of the Haight Asbury Free Clinic; members of the Manson group often visited the clinic in order to receive medical treatment for sexually transmitted diseases. (15)

In this paper, the authors write that:

[T]hrough the national media, the dominant culture in the United States has been made aware of a new style of commune which has evolved primarily in America's "hippie subculture." . . . These "hippie" communes can be categorized into six general types Crash Pad Type, Drug and Non-Drug Family Type, Drug and Non-Drug Marriage Type, and Self-Contained Rural Type . . . The common denominators in this type of commune are polygamous sexual practices involving all members of [the] group and cooperative child rearing. Following the preparation of this manuscript, the central figure in this report, Charles Manson, was arrested in connection with the Sharon Tate murders. However, it would be impudent to comment on the murders until Manson's trial has been completed. The "group marriage" is not new, of course, and has been practiced by various societies throughout history. Middle class white American youth participating in a group marriage is relatively new, however, particularly in that it represents a direct affront to the dominant culture's expressed moral code.

The authors also described Manson as "a "father figure" and "a 35-year-old white male with a past history of

involvement with the law." They further noted that:

Manson was thirty-five years of age, and had no college education. He was an extroverted, persuasive individual who served as absolute ruler of the group marriage commune. What he sanctioned was approved by the rest of the group, but what he disapproved was forbidden. (16)

The media made much out of the fact that a group of hippie youths and flower children, mostly comprised of young women, had allowed themselves to became involved with such a "Mephistophelean guru," as prosecutor Vincent Bugliosi was to later label Manson, and that those same followers so fiercely defended Manson after his arrest, a fact that seemed to call into question all that everyone knew about the counterculture. A full study of the psychology behind such thinking on both sides of the issue is beyond the scope of this article, but my point is that, in the public mind, the Manson case (and others similar to it) was and still is, touted by detractors of the hippie movement as the ultimate "I told you so" moral to the story for those who had embraced the hippie lifestyle.

However, such a perception is not quite the knockout punch it may appear to be as many residents of the Haight during that time period will tell you that Manson was only one of hundreds of such anti-establishment, LSD and mysticism philosophizers who frequented that scene. Many of these self-styled gurus were a welcomed part of the landscape and for the greater part, never betrayed any of the sometimes naïve trust placed in them by idealistic young hippies, most who thirsted for the same intense spiritual awareness and truth experienced while under the influence of psychedelics. (My research has turned up no other example of hippie "street gurus" from that era whom exploited others in such a horrendous manner and the Manson case appears to be completely unique in that sense). The fact that Manson turned out to be a person who ultimately involved his followers in violence is the real tragedy. And it is important to note that Manson did not show up on that scene handing out tabs of acid and knives while preaching violence to young hippies; his philosophical rap pretty much matched that of other street gurus at the time and the descent into an Apocalyptic vision of death and war only came along much later on.

Many of the communes formed in the 60's were often lead by a charismatic leader, a fact that seemed to determine whether or not a particular commune would survive the tests of time. And you might be surprised to learn, as I eventually did, that quite a few communes from the 60's not only survived, but are still thriving today. And while many (perhaps most) of them did indeed e ventually fall apart -- often due to the drug excesses of their members -- quite a few (numbering in the hundreds) were and still are highly successful, among them the Morningstar Ranch, The Hog Farm, the Twin Oaks Intentional Community, and one group known simply as "The Farm."

The Farm, one of the most successful of the hippie communes, was started in the rugged wilds of Summertown, Tennessee. Founded in 1971, The Farm went on to become the largest hippie commune in North America, peaking out at around 1500 people in 1980. (As of this writing, its current population stood at about 200 folks). This group pioneered many aspects of the vegetarian diet, techniques for modern midwifery and home birth, and were very active in working towards methods for alternative energy.

However, public perceptions about hippie communes during the 1960's (and even today) was that of groups of lazy, dirty hippies l ying around smoking marijuana while collecting their welfare checks. I'm in my late 40's now and when I was a teenager, I spent the summer of 1972 living on a small hippie commune in the mountains of North Carolina and the rule of law there was that if you didn't work, you didn't eat. There were no welfare checks or Manson family-style "garbage runs" in that group, but there was plenty of hard work caring for a large vegetable garden (which naturally, included a substantial crop of marijuana) and splitting loads of firewood to sell. And members of the commune often pitched in to help other "non-hippie" farmers and neighbors when they were short-handed, eventually earning the sometimes-begrudging respect from those people.

But to be completely honest, not all communes lived up to such noble standards and there were actually quite a few groups that were little more than blights on the communities that they inhabited. Or worse yet, communes that were weird beyond belief. A perfect example of the latter case was part of the subject of an article written by R. Stuart for a 2002 Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies newsletter. In an article titled Entheogenic Sects and Psychedelic Religions, Stuart discusses various psychedelic religions founded in the United States, including those that involved communal living arrangements and writes that:
In the late 1960s near Los Angeles, a group had the LSD-inspired belief that all life had equal value. They became fruitarians who ate only fruit that had fallen to the ground. Later, LSD visions revealed that God existed

on Earth incarnate in dogs, and that all of humanity's problems were caused by the mistreatment of "man's best friend." Members of the Dog Commune herded dogs, raided animal shelters to liberate their canine deities, and were among the first animal rights groups in the United States to try to stop exploitation of dogs in scientific experiments. (17)

One really needs no additional evidence that not all LSD-inspired visions are as profound as they may at first seem, especially if we assume that the "Dog Commune" was awed by the fact that "god" spelled backward is "dog" when reaching the spiritual conclusions that they did. And while the intentions of a hippie group such as the Dog Commune seems to have been mostly benign and benevolent enough, I can't help but try to imagine what it would have been like to be the up-tight, straight-laced, average-Joe citizens who were probably living next door to them.

Another controversial hippie group was the "Lyman Family" which operated a successful commune in Boston, Massachusetts known as the Fort Hill community. This group was led by folk musician Mel Lyman, who supposedly, in a Manson-like fashion, had declared himself to be God. (In his book The Autobiography of a World Savior, Lyman claimed that he came from another planet and had been sent to Earth to restore humanity to its original balance). (18)

In 1971, the Lyman Family would come under attack by one of the counter culture's very own voices: the fledgling music magazine Rolling Stone, usually a staid bastion of support for all things relating to hippie culture. Rolling Stone printed a scathing and highly critical two-part cover story written by David Felton about the Lyman Family commune. In that article, Felton charged that Mel Lyman was a Charles Manson-like leader who controlled his followers though psychedelic drugs, mind control and fear. (It has been observed that LSD can make the person under its influence vulnerable to the influence of a second party. In Felton's story -- and later in a full-length book -- he used the expression "acid fascism" to describe how psychedelic users were often so open to suggestion that they could be exploited by unprincipled persons, the Charles Manson case being the most classic example of this). (19)

Another article about the Lyman Family that appeared in the Boston Phoenix newspaper also raised the specter of the Manson family, noting that:

Despite the obvious material gains of the communards -- or perhaps because of them -- they came under increasing attack. Only a couple of years earlier, the nation had been horrified by the ritual murders committed on the West Coast by communal disciples of Charles Manson. By 1971, a grim skepticism about alternative lifestyles had permeated America. Critics of Fort Hill life began to suggest that Lyman was the Manson-like center of a dangerous personality cult. (20)

Members of the Lyman commune, like the Process Church before them, did little at the time to quash the sordid speculation: it was reported by several people that the group paid homage to Charles Manson by keeping a poster of him hung on the wall under which they placed a vase full of fresh flowers daily. And according to another source, Manson family member Lynnette "Squeaky" Fromme used to visit and occasionally stay with Lyman in a home he owned in Los Angeles and that Manson and Lyman corresponded with each other for a brief period. Jim Kweskin, a member of the Lyman family, who, upon learning that his group had been compared to Manson's, jokingly quipped that:
"The Manson family preached peace and love and went around killing people. We don't preach peace and love." (21)

And while most of the charges leveled at the Lyman Family would eventually prove to have been just so much hype -- even Rolling Stone would later admit later that Felton's story had been mostly an exaggeration -- the negative association with the Manson family would continue to haunt them for many years.

As of 1997, the Lyman group was still together, having amassed quite a sizeable fortune through real estate holdings and a home remodeling business. (Mel Lyman died in 1978 under circumstances that still remain a mystery). (22)

Another hippie phenomenon that arose out of the counterculture and which would also suffer from associations to "drug crazed cultists" was the so-called "Jesus freak" movement of the late 1960's and early 1970's. (The Jesus freak phenomenon was a cultural happening that I was able to observe up close and personal as I watched several of my own relatives and siblings, former hippies all, get sucked into the whole "hippies turned-

on to Jesus" movement. The Jesus freak trend was at the forefront of what would later blossom into yet a nother major cultural icon of fear, that being the phalanx of insidious "brainwashing religious cults" that flourished from their beginnings in the early 1970's all the way into present times. Many hippies and other idealistic young people seeking a new spirituality were lured into these groups, many of which were -- or later became -- genuinely dangerous).

Known originally as "The Jesus Movement" or "The Jesus People," Jesus freaks described themselves as a "counter-counter-cultural movement." Jesus freaks were primarily hippies who had become disenchanted with certain aspects of the hippie value system and who sought to combine the peace and love of the hippie movement with old-time Christian evangelism. (While the name "Jesus freak" was originally coined as a derogatory label by other hippies -- the term "freak" being a common hippie description of anyone obsessed with a certain type of mind trip -- the moniker was soon proudly adopted by the Jesus People themselves). (23)

Like a great many things related to the hippies, the roots of the Jesus freak movement had its genesis in San Francisco's Haight A shbury district where in 1967 Christian evangelical missions such as "The Living Room" were opened in small storefronts in the hippie business districts. Many of these "psychedelic evangelical" groups served as temporary shelters for the multitude of young hippies who had come to San Francisco and other major cities to join in the flower power vibe, only to find themselves homeless and living on the streets. (24)

As noted, the Jesus freaks kept the same style, dress, and language of the hippies, but changed such hippie ideas as "free love" to "free love of God" and brotherly love of other people. (A famous Jesus freak motto was "One Way," a term that sought to remove focus away from the individual, as the original hippie movement tended to focus on, and instead shifted one's consciousness towards a love of Jesus). (25)

Additionally, the birth of so-called "Christian rock," the combination of rock music and Christian gospel, was an original product of the Jesus freak movement. Major examples of this were those films and Broadway plays that featured Jesus freak soundtracks and themes, such as Jesus Christ Superstar and Godspell. (The music created within the Jesus freak movement has now morphed into what is the contemporary Christian music of today). (26)

Many hippies who became Jesus freaks had sought out the Jesus movement after experiencing either bad drug freak-outs or in some cases, because they were seeking the same sort of positive mystical and religious experience that they had encountered under the influence of psychedelic drugs, such as LSD. In many cases, what they sought was to substitute their personal drug experiences for "getting high on Jesus." (It should be noted that while most of the Jesus freak groups chose to eschew the use of drugs, many did not and/or its members just continued to use drugs on the sly. Hippies who gravitated toward the Jesus freak movement also tended to remain somewhat anti-establishment to some degree).

The Jesus freak phenomenon began to receive major publicity in America beginning around 1970 with the press reporting such events as hippies being baptized in rivers or in the ocean, Jesus freaks acting as tuned-in counterculture street preachers, and the publishing of hippie Christian newsletters. (Those newsletters were laid out in the style of the counterculture's own "underground" newspapers, complete with psychedelic graphics and language. The use of elements of psychedelia to attract hippie followers and converts became a popular tactic practiced by many of the so-called "cults" that sprang up in the late 60's and early 70's, most notably, by the Hare Krishnas and to a lesser extent, Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church). (27)

But the Jesus freak movement was not without controversy. Many of these groups would later become identified with Manson-like beliefs about a coming Apocalyptic doomsday, with a few of these groups espousing concepts that even rivaled the Process' belief in a "Final Judgment" and Manson's "Helter Skelter" for out-and-out unadulterated weirdness.

One major strange influence on both the Jesus freak movement and fundamentalist Christianity was author Hal Lindsey's series of books about a coming Apocalypse and the rise of the Antichrist as prophesized in the Christian Bible. This series began with the 1970 book The Late Great Planet Earth, a tale that sought to meld "end of the world" Biblical prophecy with world political events current at the time the book was written.

Lindsey, a conservative Christian fundamentalist, published The Late Great Planet Earth at the height of the Cold War, warning that Biblical prophecy pointed toward an invasion of Israel by the former Soviet Union, an act that he believed would trigger the Battle of Armageddon in the form of World War III, the last war on the face of

the earth.

The Late Great Planet Earth, written in a style that used common language and which read almost like an action novel, became the best selling book of the decade, with over 15 million copies sold. It also launched an intense modern interest and belief among both Jesus freaks and fundamentalist Christians about a violent Apocalyptic end to the world, an event that Lindsey's book suggested was actually quite imminent. (In the book, Lindsey prophesizes that there will be a period of great tribulation with plagues, wars, and famines and that Jesus Christ will then appear for the promised "Rapture," lifting up to heaven all those who believe in him, leaving the rest of humanity to suffer through seven more years of tribulation under the rule of the Antichrist). (28)

Lindsey next published Satan Is Alive and Well on Planet Earth, a book that warned against "occult influences" present in the world. Lindsey (much like Ed Sanders before him) alleges that there were active satanic hippie communes afoot practicing such things as the ritual sacrifice of animals where the blood was drained and mixed with LSD in a cauldron to be used as a drink during occult rituals that involved "sexual deviation, pagan ceremonies, and rites which defy imagination." Lindsey also hinted that the practices of these alleged satanic hippie cults might have also crossed into the realm of human sacrifice by trotting out the cases of Stanley Dean Baker and the Manson Family. That book also strongly implied that the Antichrist might be living among us now and that the triggering of Armageddon (perhaps in the form of a thermonuclear war with the former Soviet Union) was only awaiting the right series of events to be set into motion. (29)

Lindsey found the basis for most of the information for his prophecies in the Christian Bible's book of Matthew and the book of Revelation. (And yes, if you are noticing the similarities between all of this and the philosophies espoused in both the Process Church's belief in a "Final Judgment" and the Manson family's assertion that Helter Skelter was only awaiting the right spark to ignite a final, bloody war, you are definitely paying attention).

The subsequent formation of Jesus freak communes in some rural communities, many of them who embraced Apocalyptic beliefs similar to Hal Lindsey's, were not always as well received as one might imagine a group of young Christians might have been! The negative fallout from media images and stories of a bible-obsessed Manson family and a scripture-quoting "satanist" Process Church had led to much public mistrust and fear. And that fear was in turn transferred straight to the Jesus freak communes by way of a generalized suspicion and mistrust of those in the Jesus freak movement who were, for the most part, very sincere in their Christian beliefs, but who also had the same outward appearances as any of the other "long haired drug cultists" that were being reported in the press. (30)

Adding fuel to this general fear and suspicion were such notorious Jesus freak groups as The Children of God, a weird group of hippie Christians who very closely fit the stereotyped image of a brainwashing cult (and who were also at times mistakenly believed to be comprised of remnants of the original Manson family, both by other hippies and by the general public).

Formed in 1968 and led by a charismatic leader named David Berg (a.k.a. "Moses") the Children of God -- sometimes known as "The Family of Love" or simply as "The Family"-- in many ways epitomized the stereotypical image of hippie Jesus freaks, espousing a combination of Christian evangelism, the counterculture revolutionary ideal and sexual freedom. They also preached a doom-and-gloom Apocalyptic theology that included the belief that California would be devastated by a major earthquake, with the entire state sliding into the sea and later, that all of the United States would be destroyed by the comet Kohoutek in 1974.

The Children of God were often to be encountered during the early 1970's -- even by this author as a young hippie teenager -- encamped by their psychedelic school buses at outdoor rock concerts where they would hand out free food while seeking to recruit new members. Their reputation for being a "cult" was well established, even in the hippie communities I was associated with. (And I can recall quite vividly how I was strenuously warned by several hippie "elders" to stay away from them as they were considered to be a "Manson-type" group).

By 1974, the Children of God were in trouble with the law and faced charges that included tax evasion, kidnapping and assault. They were also eventually embroiled in even more scandal when female members were accused of using sex to entice men who were not part of the movement in order to convert them into cult members (a form of religious recruitment that Berg called "flirty fishing"). (31)

But this general attitude of mistrust by rural locals was by no means exclusive to hippie Jesus freak communes,

but rather was extended to all communes in general, which in many cases, the local populace had been led to believe were nothing less than dens of iniquity and general wickedness, populated by dirty, crazy hippies on drugs.

In the introduction to his book on the hippie communes of the 1960's, author Timothy Miller comments on the "out-of-this-world" publicity that seemed to dominate most of the media attention given to communal living in general during the 60's, writing that:
Both scholars and reporters embodied in their work a great range of points of view, from favorable to severely hostile, with a great many somewhere in the bemused middle ("I can't quite believe all this!"). A good many of these works were sensationalistic, often focusing breathlessly on the casual nudity that frequently prevailed at the counter-cultural communities or on the use of psychedelics and other controlled substances that was so popular among communal and non-communal hippies alike. (32)

And regarding the effects of the media hype on public perceptions of what actually went on inside a typical hippie commune, Miller also states that:
Sensationalism, then as now, was the order of the day for any self-respecting news outlet; so much of the coverage focused on nudity and drug use, real or rumored, and thus helped to feed the local hostility toward communes that broke out so often. (33)

It is important to understand that the true spirit that drove the counterculture to break free from the establishment's old ideas of how to live was based firmly in the desire among hippies to form their own societies with their own standards of living that more closely reflected the hippie value system. Communes were the most logical next step toward breaking free of an establishment that was viewed by many as having proved that it was corrupt, broken-down, and past its prime.

And it is not surprising that to most of middle class, homogenized America of that period, the idea of hippies participating in such "exotic" experiments as communal living and group marriage was very much seen as a direct threat to their way of life, and as noted in the Haight Ashbury Free Clinic study cited earlier, this was primarily because such activity represented (and to a large degree, still represents) a form of "deviancy" that directly threatens middle class notions of "normalcy" and "morality." That certain aspects of the hippie lifestyle were so misunderstood and that the media sought to engage in such blatant fear-mongering at the hippies' expense can, to some degree, be seen almost as a normal reaction on the part of "straight" society.

Author Rosemary Baer, whose husband was a juror during the Manson murder trial, would later write that:
The Tate-LaBianca case, it has been said, is not so much a trial of four defendants accused of seven and a half murders, as [much as it is] a trial of the long-haired, loose-living, group-sex, drug-oriented, hippie subculture by the established culture of our society. (34)

And to further illustrate just how much the image of the "crazed hippie cultist" had colored the minds of "normal" society, consider the following from a 1996 interview with a former communard at Black Bear Ranch:
Simple rumors and stereotypes greeted the communal pioneers in a great many places. At Black Bear Ranch the original settlers h ad little contact with the scattered local residents, but years later, when tensions had eased, an early communard asked a neighbor, "What did people think about us when we first came up there?" The two-word answer: "Charles Manson." (35)

To be sure, the neighbors living near many of America's hippie communes were (at first) often less than happy to have them there, an attitude that stemmed from the obvious lifestyle differences as much as anything. And for the greater part, the hostility encountered by longhaired communards came in the form of dirty looks, unkind words, and police harassment with some businesses actually posting "Hippies Not Welcome" signs. But occasionally, situations did erupt into outright violence. One of the worst examples of this sort of aggression happened to various inhabitants of the many hippie communes established in Taos, New Mexico (the place where Manson girl Linda Kasabian would flee to three days after the murders occurred). Beginning in the late 1960's, a huge hippie invasion of Taos had begun, much to the resentment of the entrenched locals. Author Timothy Miller writes:

The following are just a few of the many instances of violence that occurred over a short span of time in 1969 and 1970: The Volkswagen van of a commune was dynamited by night; later a building on the property was burned to the ground. Hippies were brutally beaten up on the street on many occasions. A hitchhiking longhair was sentenced to jail for possession of a "concealed weapon" -- a tiny pocketknife. Vehicles were shot up in

various situations. Anonymous phone calls threatened arson and murder. A hippie woman was gang-raped. A macrobiotic restaurant was destroyed. A sign appeared on a Taos building: “The only good hippie is a dead hippie. Kill.” . . . The nadir of the conflict was the murder of Michael Press, a hip resident of the Kingdom of Heaven commune at Guadalupita, New Mexico on August 5, 1970, and, on that day and the next, the beating of three other members and [the] triple rape of yet another. (36)

In the case of the murder noted above, the killers were only given light sentences on a reduced charge, further illustrating just how deep the negative emotions against the hippies living there ran.

But the backlash against hippies in the wake of the Manson murders and the similar crimes and incidents noted above was by no means confined to such hippie bastions as California and New Mexico. Media sensationalism injected the new image of hippies as drugged-out murderers into the public consciousness with a powerful intensity. And the use of that image as a propaganda tool seemed to be in full force and effect all across America. Author Karlene Faith writes:

[R]everbarations from the Manson murders affected the lives of counterculture people throughout California and beyond. Since Manson and his followers were reasonably perceived to be hippies, all hippies became suspect and ready targets for disdain and harassment. After the crime, anyone with long hair driving a Volkswagen bus, the hippie vehicle of choice, stood a good chance of being pulled over by the police . . . The “dirty hippie” stigma was radically intensified, as was adult contempt for youthful idealism . . . The fear and harassment of hippies that occurred after the crimes was as destructive to healthy communes as it was to those already dysfunctional. It was as if the dominant culture, in cahoots with the media, had been waiting for the Manson “family” to happen so that they would have “proof” that the hippie movement was no good. The antagonism between hippies and “straight” society was based on their antithetical values. In the context of social disruptions the Manson murders were a convenient excuse for a backlash. Parents were warning their hippie kids, “See what could happen to you?” (37)

In a 1969 Time Magazine article about the Manson murders, a Dr. Lewis Yablonsky was quoted as saying that he “believes that there has been far more violence among the hippies than most people realize,” stating further that:
There has always been a potential for murder . . . [M]any hippies are socially almost dead inside. Some require massive emotions to feel anything at all. They need bizarre, intensive acts to feel alive -- sexual acts, acts of violence, nudity, every kind of Dionysian thrill. (38)

The hippie movement today has mostly recovered from the liability left behind by groups like the Manson family and from once having been associated with such drug violence and other negative stereotypes. And the repeat of a similar “hippie” crime like the Manson murders, occurring during such a pivotal point in “hippie history,” seems an unlikely event.

But you can be assured that there are probably still a few people around who simply refuse to let go of the idea that experimenting with strange drugs, practicing free love and living freaky lifestyles were somehow to blame for such horrors. Hopefully, similar hysteria will be recognized for what it is the next time around.

Footnotes

(1) Helter Skelter: The True Story of the Manson Murders by Vincent Bugliosi with Curt Gentry, Bantam Books, first edition, 1974, page 297.

(2) Squeaky: The Life and Times of Lynette Alice Fromme by Jess Bravin, St. Martin’s Press; (June 1997), page 107.

(3) Squeaky: The Life and Times of Lynette Alice Fromme by Jess Bravin, St. Martin’s Press; (June 1997), page 112.

(4) Helter Skelter: The True Story of the Manson Murders by Vincent Bugliosi with Curt Gentry, Bantam Books, first edition, 1974, pp. 591-597.

(5) See Life Magazine, December 12, 1969; The Love and Terror Cult.

(6) The Long Prison Journey of Leslie Van Houten: Life Beyond the Cult, by Karlene Faith; Northeastern University Press; Chapter One; Getting Acquainted, p. 9.; see also My Acid Trip with Groucho, by Paul Krassner, High Times magazine, Feb 1981.

(7) See John Linley Frazier, the Killer Prophet and Hippie Murderer, Chapter 1, The Year of the Hippie Murders, by Katherine Ramsland archived at www.crimelibrary.com.

(8) See Fatal Vision, by Joe McGinniss, New American Library; Reissue edition (March 1999). See also, Fatal Justice: Reinvestigating the MacDonald Murders, by Jerry Allen Potter and Fred Bost, W.W. Norton & Company; Reprint edition (April 1997) in which the authors, after conducting a nine year investigation into MacDonald's claims of a hippie cult being responsible for the murders of his family, come to the conclusion that vital findings supporting MacDonald's version of events were never presented at his trial and that his story about a group of hippie murderers may have in fact, been true.

(9) See Crimes and Punishment: The Illustrated Crime Encyclopedia; H S Stuttman Co; September 1994; see also Cannibalism: The Last Taboo by Brian Marriner; Arrow Books 1992; see also Minority Religions, Social Change, and Freedom of Conscience; The Satanic Bible: Quasi-Scripture/Counter-Scripture; James R. Lewis (Department of Philosophy, University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point); from the 2002 CESNUR International Conference; Salt Lake City and Provo (Utah), June 20-23, 2002.

(10) See Santa Cruz Sentinel article titled, The1970s; "Murder Capital of the World."

(11) The Die Song: A Journey into the Mind of a Mass Murderer by Donald T. Lunde, Jefferson Morgan, W.W. Norton & Company; March 1980.

(12) The Consumers Union Report on Licit and Illicit Drugs, by Edward M. Brecher and the editors of Consumer Reports magazine, 1972.

(13) See Snopes Urban Legend Reference Pages at www.snopes.com. While doing research for this article, I discovered that there are a great many other myths associated with taking LSD, among them the belief that taking LSD seven times makes you legally insane (the estimated number of times varied depended on who was telling the tale, but it is usually some figure under ten; another variant on this same myth is that if you take LSD a certain number of times, you can't testify in court. Those particular rumors seem to have begun somewhere between 1967 and 1975). In the book Storming Heaven, author Jay Stevens noted several LSD rumors that fed the general hysteria that began to crop up in the mid-60's, noting that: "Police departments around the country opened their own files to reporters eager to get a local angle on a breaking national story [regarding the abuse of LSD] . . . [T]here was the heavy user who, believing LSD had trans-mutated him into an orange, refused all human contact for fear of being turned into orange juice [Author's note: possible urban legend] . . . [There were many reports of LSD use] which verged on the weird rather than the horrible . . . like the time the LAPD found two guys sitting on a suburban lawn eating the grass and nibbling on tree bark. Or the time they received a complaint that a young man was standing beside the Coast Highway making obscene gestures at the traffic. When the police arrived, the guy dashed into the ocean, fell to his knees and began to pray, all the while yelling "I love you! I love you!" Then there was the time someone reported screams in a downtown apartment building and the police found a boy and girl having sex in the hall and shouting "God" and "Life" at the top of their lungs . . . reading the Los Angeles newspapers, one would have thought that scarcely a day passed that LSD didn't contribute to some calamity, usually involving teenagers. Yet police files show that in the first four months of 1966, out of 543 juveniles arrested for narcotics, only four involved LSD." Other urban myths about LSD includes the tales of liquid LSD being painted onto the numbered key pads in pay telephone booths where unsuspecting people would come into contact with the drug (urban legend); that LSD could be extracted from Foster's beer due to the "fact" that Foster's is made from ergot-containing grains -- ergot being the wheat mold that is the precursor to making LSD (urban legend); the infamous belief that some LSD was contaminated with the poison strychnine (unproven), and that LSD damages your chromosomes (untrue, in fact, you can get more chromosomal damage from drinking a cup of coffee).

(14) The Long Prison Journey of Leslie Van Houten: Life Beyond the Cult, by Karlene Faith; Northeastern University Press; Chapter One; Getting Acquainted, p. 9.

(15) See The Group Marriage Commune: A Case Study, David E. Smith, M.D., Alan J. Rose, published in the Journal of Psychedelic Drugs, 3(1): 115-119, September 1970.

(16) The Group Marriage Commune: A Case Study, David E. Smith, M.D., Alan J. Rose, published in the Journal of Psychedelic Drugs, 3(1):115-119, September 1970.

(17) From Entheogenic Sects and Psychedelic Religions by R. Stuart; MAPS, Vol. XIII, Number 1, Sex, Spirit, and Psychedelics, 2002, p. 17; see also Divine Smoke and God's Flesh: Psychedelics and Religion by Peter Gorman, Best of High Times #17, 1995; pp. 74-78. (Reprinted from High Times January 1990 issue).

(18) Autobiography of a World Savior, by Mel Lyman; Jonas Press; 1966.

(19) The Lyman Family's Holy Siege of America, by David Felton; Rolling Stone, 1971, Issue No. 98; see also Mindfuckers: A Source Book on the Rise of Acid Fascism in America Including material on Charles Manson, Mel Lyman, Victor Baranco and Their Followers by David Felton; pp. 149-153; Straight Arrow Books; 1972.

(20) The Boston Phoenix, Section Two, July 16, 1985; article by Michael Matza.

(21) Apocalypse Culture; Mel Lyman: God's Own Story; Laura Whitcomb; material compiled by John Aes-Nihil; edited by Adam Parfrey; pp. 152-158.

(22) Once-Notorious '60s Commune Evolves Into Respectability; Los Angeles Times, August 4, 1985; Sunday, Home Edition; View; Part 6; p. 1; see also Roxbury Commune Survives on Fort Hill by Seth Cobin; Bay State Banner; June 19, 1997.

(23) See Wikipedia at www.en.wikipedia.org; key words: Jesus Movement.

(24) From History of the Jesus Movement by David Di Sabatino, November 1997.

(25) See Wikipedia at www.en.wikipedia.org; key words: Jesus Movement.

(26) History of the Jesus Movement by David Di Sabatino, November 1997.

(27) The 60's Communes: Hippies and Beyond, by Timothy Miller, Syracuse University Press, 1999, Chapter 5: Searching for a Common Center: Religious and Spiritual Communes, pp. 93-102.

(28) The Late Great Planet Earth by Hal Lindsey with C.C. Carlson, Zondervan Publishing Company, May 1970. Central to this book's ideas are the belief in the Second Coming of Christ, the time of Tribulation, and "the Rapture." The Tribulation is an event describes by Christians as a period of great suffering for the people on planet Earth under the rule of the Antichrist. This interpretation of Bible scripture states that the Tribulation will then lead to "the Rapture," an event that Christians believe will take place just before the battle of Armageddon -- the last war to be fought on the face of the earth -- has begun. The Rapture is described as an event where Jesus will return to lift the faithful up into heaven, and as some Christians believe, literally from out of moving cars, airplanes in flight, from the windows of tall buildings and through the ceilings of their own homes. The resurrection of the dead will also occur at the same time, leaving non-Christians behind to suffer through seven more years of pain and horror under the reign of the Antichrist. After the defeat of the Antichrist by an army sent by God, there will follow a time called "the Millennium," described as "a thousand years of peace and plenty and paradise on Earth."

(29) Satan Is Alive and Well on Planet Earth by Hal Lindsey and Carole C. Carlson, Zondervan Publishing Company, December 1972; pp. 17-22. This book is an account of Lindsey's condemnation of such "occult" ideas as spiritualism, astrology and the rise of "new age" religions that he claims are the direct result of the Antichrist being in our midst. Lindsey writes that the modern rise of witchcraft and black magic constitutes the "false worship" that Bible scriptures point out as one indication that the Antichrist has arose and is exerting his influence on the world. Lindsey went on to publish a whole series of similar books with "end times" Apocalyptic themes, including The Terminal Generation (1976), The 1980's: Countdown to Armageddon (1980), Planet Earth: 2000 A.D.: Will Mankind Survive? (1994), The Final Battle (1995) and Apocalypse Code (1997).

(30) The 60's Communes: Hippies and Beyond, by Timothy Miller, Syracuse University Press, 1999, Chapter 5: Searching for a Common Center: Religious and Spiritual Communes, pp. 93-102.

(31) The 60's Communes: Hippies and Beyond, by Timothy Miller, Syracuse University Press, 1999, Chapter 5: Searching for a Common Center: Religious and Spiritual Communes, pp. 98-97; see also The Family (a.k.a. Children Of God, Family Of Love) at www.religioustolerance.org/fam_love.htm.

(32) The 60's Communes: Hippies and Beyond, by Timothy Miller, Syracuse University Press, 1999, Introduction, p. xvi.

(33) The 60's Communes: Hippies and Beyond, by Timothy Miller, Syracuse University Press, 1999, Chapter 1: Set and Setting: The Roots of the 1960's-Era Communes, p. 15.

(34) See Reflections on the Manson Trial: Journal of a Pseudo-Juror by Rosemary Baer; W Publishing Group; May 1972; pp. 58-59. Baer, whose husband was a juror during the Manson trial, wrote this book while imagining that it was she who had been a juror instead. Her musings are rooted in her Christian beliefs and her comments are geared toward how she might have applied her religious perspective to the many moral issues she felt were raised by the trial concerning the hippie lifestyle.

(35) The 60's Communes: Hippies and Beyond, by Timothy Miller, Syracuse University Press, 1999, Chapter 9: Doing It: Daily Life in the Communes, pp. 218-219.

(36) The 60's Communes: Hippies and Beyond, by Timothy Miller, Syracuse University Press, 1999, Chapter: 9, The Worst-Case Scenario: Violence at Taos, pp. 222-224.

(37) The Long Prison Journey of Leslie Van Houten: Life Beyond the Cult, by Karlene Faith; Northeastern University Press; Chapter Five; A New Trial, pp. 109-110.

(38) The Demon in Death Valley; Time Magazine, December 12, 1969; "Hippies and Violence."

Additional Sources

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